

REMARKS

I. Status of the claims

After entering this amendment, claims 90-101 and 103 will be pending. Claim 90 has been amended to incorporate the subject matter of claim 102. Support for this amendment can be found, for example, in paragraph [0023] of the published application. In light of this amendment, claim 102 has been cancelled.

II. Information Disclosure Statement

Applicants thank the Office for returning the PTO/SB/08 form corresponding to the Information Disclosure Statement filed on April 30, 2007. However, U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2003/0183550, the first reference on page 1 of that PTO/SB/08 form, has not been initialed. Applicants respectfully request that the Office return another copy of the PTO/SB/08 form indicating that this reference has been considered.

III. Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102

The Office rejected claims 90, 92-94, 96-98, 102 and 103 under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as allegedly being anticipated by U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2005/0161358 ("*Kern*"). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

Kern has a filing date of June 2, 2004, and claims priority from U.S. Provisional Application No. 60/475,544, filed on June 3, 2003. Without considering whether the disclosure relied on by the Office in *Kern* is supported in the provisional application, *Kern's* earliest 102(e) date is June 3, 2003. However, Applicants have an earlier effective filing date because the instant application claims priority from U.S. Provisional

Application No. 60/447,440, ("the '440 provisional application") filed on February 14, 2003. The current claims are supported by the disclosure in the '440 provisional application (see, e.g., the claims in the provisional application). Support for the current amendment regarding the density of the bulk material can be found, for example on page 14 of the '440 provisional application.

Applicants also note that none of the currently-pending claims in *Kern* recite an evacuator.

Therefore, because the instant application has an earlier effective filing date, *Kern* is not available as prior art. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that this rejection be withdrawn.

IV. Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103

The Office rejected claims 91, 95, and 99-101 under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as allegedly being unpatentable over *Kern*, in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,157,754 ("*Bartsch*"). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

As mentioned in the previous section, *Kern* is not proper prior art against this application. *Bartsch* was cited solely for its disclosure of cellulose acetate fibers, but fails to disclose all of the limitations of the instant claims. Therefore, the cited prior art fails to meet all of the limitations of the claims. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that this rejection be withdrawn.

V. Conclusions

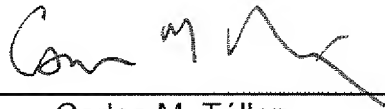
In view of the foregoing remarks, the claimed invention is neither anticipated nor rendered obvious in view of the cited references. Applicants therefore request the entry

of this Amendment, the Office's reconsideration and reexamination of the application,
and the timely allowance of the pending claims.

Please grant any extensions of time required to enter this response and charge
any additional required fees to Deposit Account No. 06-0916.

Respectfully submitted,

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